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ABSTRACT

This document is a guide to be used when presenting the videotape, "A More Perfect Union," to diverse audiences, including school boards, bar associations, police departments, teachers' workshops, civic associations, or other groups. The videotape was produced to introduce law related education (LRE) to educators, law professionals, and members of the community who are interested in learning about this area of civic education. The videotape shows how schools throughout the country teach concepts of law and citizenship to students at all grade levels. Through a variety of active learning techniques, law related education stimulates critical thinking in young people about their future role and responsibility as participating citizens in a constitutional democracy. This guide for those presenting the videotape is divided into two parts. Part 1 prepares the presenter to make a knowledgeable and effective presentation. "Scenes from the Videotape" provides background in the order in which the scenes appear. Contact organizations for gathering more information are listed at the end of some scene descriptions. Part 2 provides resource information that can be duplicated and distributed to appropriate audiences. Sections are included on why law related education is important for teachers, administrators, attorneys, the courts, and law enforcement. In addition, the pre-viewing and post-viewing discussion guides may be useful handouts. A list of leaders in law related education also is included. (DK)

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Presenter's Guide

A MORE PERFECT UNION

An Introduction to Law-Related Education

SO 023 622

Special Committee on Youth Education for Citizenship ABA American Bar Association

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Contents

PART ONE

About This Videotape 1
How to Use This Guide 1
Why LRE Is Important 2
Pre-viewing Discussion Guide 2
Post-viewing Discussion Guide 2
Scenes from the Videotape 3
- Isidore Starr—The "Father of Law-Related Education" 3
- Infusing Law Throughout the Curriculum 3
  - The Chalk Game 3
- What Is Peer Mediation? 4
- Law Students Cooperate with Schools 4
- Bringing Practical Law into the Classroom 4
- What Is a Law Magnet School? 5
- Special Event: A Moot Court Competition 5
- Citizens of the World: A Visit to The Hague 5
- A Civic Responsibility — Community Service 6
- Brooklyn Schools Adopted by District Attorney's Office 6
- A Law Day Student Conference 6

PART TWO

What Is Law-Related Education? 7
Why Law-Related Education Is Important for Teachers 8
Why School Administrators Should Include Law-Related Education in their Schools 9
Why Attorneys Should Be Involved in Law-Related Education 10
How the Courts Can Be Involved in Law-Related Education 11
Why Law-Related Education Is Important for Police Officers 12

inside Back Cover: Those Who Made the Videotape, *A More Perfect Union*, Possible

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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON YOUTH EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP
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Paula A. Nessel, *Project Coordinator*

National Law-Related Education Resource Center

For information about the law-related education programs serving your state, see the insert, "Law-related Education (LRE) Leaders."

The National Law-Related Education Resource Center provides a wide range of support services for LRE, including consulting services to educators, attorneys and others interested in bringing law-related education to students throughout the country. For further information contact: National LRE Resource Center, ABA/YEFC, 541 N. Fairbanks Court, 15th Floor, Chicago, IL 60611-3314, 312/988-5735.

About This Videotape

A More Perfect Union was produced by the American Bar Association Special Committee on Youth Education for Citizenship to introduce law-related education (LRE) to educators, law professionals and members of the community who are interested in learning about this exciting area of civic education.

This videotape shows how schools throughout the country teach concepts of law and citizenship to students at all grade levels. Through a variety of active learning techniques, law-related education stimulates critical thinking in young people about their future role and responsibility as participating citizens in our constitutional democracy.

How To Use This Guide

This guide was designed to aid the presenter in achieving maximum benefits when showing *A More Perfect Union* to diverse audiences, including school boards, bar associations, police departments, teachers' workshops, civic associations or other groups. Part One of the guide contains information about LRE in general and the videotape in particular. Part Two contains handouts intended for specific audiences.

Part One prepares the presenter to make a knowledgeable and effective presentation. "Scenes from the Videotape" provides background information in the order in which the scenes appear. As you preview the videotape, stop at each scene and read the accompanying description. Prior to your presentation, you might want to gather more information from the contact organizations listed at the end of some scene descriptions.

Part Two provides resource information that can be duplicated and distributed to appropriate audiences. In addition, the "Pre-viewing Discussion Guide," "Post-viewing Discussion Guide" and other sections of Part 1 may be useful audience handouts.

Also included is a list of "Law-related Education (LRE) Leaders." Please note the organization(s) serving your state.

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions about the videotape, the *Presenter's Guide* or LRE, please direct them to the National Law-Related Education Resource Center, ABA/YEFC, 541 N. Fairbanks Court, 15th Floor, Chicago, IL 60611-3314, 312/988-5735.

Why LRE Is Important

As you look at the faces of the children in the tape, note the concentration, enthusiasm and excitement. These children need no coaching to appear that way "on camera" because LRE engages them *actively* in learning about the law, legal processes and civic participation.

No one expects students to learn to read, write, do arithmetic or even play baseball without practice, yet the crucial skills of citizenship are often taught without any opportunity for practice. Children need to learn both their rights and responsibilities and have the opportunity to exercise them.

That is what law-related education is all about. Whether in kindergarten or twelfth grade, students who learn sound ethical reasoning and strong decision-making skills through LRE will be better prepared for citizenship while becoming assets to their community and productive members of society.

Pre-Viewing Discussion Guide

A More Perfect Union is a starting point for learning about LRE. It involves not only teachers and students in the classroom but many different kinds of people in many different settings. The videotape highlights only a few. While watching the tape, viewers should note:

- the different professions (teacher, principal, attorney, law student, judge, police officer, district attorney, paralegal, LRE project director) represented and the way they cooperate in teaching LRE;
- the various strategies used in teaching LRE (games, Socratic questioning, cooperative learning, brainstorming, story telling, roleplaying, site visits, guest speakers, mediation);
- the type of skills students acquire through their LRE experiences (listening, speaking, reading, writing, critical thinking); and
- the level of complexity of the concepts taught at different age levels (the need for rules, fairness, dispute resolution, rights in conflict).

Post-Viewing Discussion Guide

To debrief the film, use the following points to stimulate discussion:

- LRE can involve all grade levels and be used in many subject areas.

  Which subject areas (e.g. social studies, language arts, government, science, introduction to law) were suggested by the activities shown in the tape? What other subject areas might infuse the LRE activities shown?
- Many different professions are involved in LRE.

  What professions were represented in the tape? What other professions serve as community resources for LRE?
- Most of the scenes in the videotape took place inside schools.

  What sites within the viewers' community could be used for LRE field trips (e.g. court, police academy, city hall)?
- What basic skills were developed by:
  - — the story-telling?
  - — the chalk game?
  - — the tenant/landlord conflict discussion?
  - — the moot court competition?
  - — the forensics class?
  - — the mediation training?
  - — the student tutoring project?
- Have any of the viewers used the activities shown?
- Which of the activities shown seems most attractive or most easy to use?
- Where can viewers go for LRE assistance and/or materials?

Scenes from the Videotape

ISIDORE STARR—THE "FATHER OF LAW-RELATED EDUCATION"

Isidore Starr, Professor Emeritus, Queens College

"For me, it began in the 1930s. I taught social studies in the daytime to raise funds for law school tuition. . . . I included constitutional law, criminal law, torts and contracts in my social studies classes ...What amazed me at the time was the effect of law-related discussions on the interest and quality of student thinking. In time, I began to find the uses of law in social studies an important means of breaking through superficial textbook commentary to case study confrontations of value conflicts, the nature of decision making, and the quest for a hierarchy of values in our society."

INFUSING LAW THROUGHOUT THE CURRICULUM

In the videotape a fifth grade class plays the "chalk game," second graders hear a story about "Hard-working Hannah," a middle school class negotiates an NFL contract and an English class discusses *Inherit the Wind*. All are examples of how law-related education can be infused throughout the K-12 curriculum.

Literature and the social sciences provide a wealth of infusion opportunities, as do areas such as art, music, science, and sports. For example, art students can sketch legal or law-related themes. Music students can learn about music contracts and copyright. Inventive science projects can spur a discussion of patents, royalties and forensics. Sports can be a springboard for discussion of rules and fairness.

The Chalk Game

(Adapted from "The Buckle Game " designed by Harriet Bickleman Joseph.)

a. Tell the first person in each line to pass the chalk from the front to the back of the line. Tell the last person to bring the chalk up to the first person in the line.

b. After students begin to play, the teacher is to interrupt the game at intervals to give one of the following directions:

— Oh, you are to pass the chalk with your eyes closed.

— Oh, you must pass the chalk with your left hand.

— Oh, everyone should be on their knees.

— Oh, you are to come backwards to me when you bring the chalk .

c. After each interruption, ask teams to begin again.

d. Stop to review problems with the children. Note that they had difficulties because of the way that the rules were given. Lack of agreement about the rules and constant change of direction lead to confusion.

e. Write "A rule should be easy to follow," on the board. Work with the group to develop a clear set of rules for the Chalk Game. List the children's suggestions, then vote to select a few simple rules for the game.

f. Play the game again to demonstrate that clear rules and directions make for a good experience while playing together.

WHAT IS PEER MEDIATION?

Discipline is a school problem usually delegated to the assistant principal. At Rich East High School in Park Forest, Illinois the assistant principal and a professor of social work joined forces to set up a peer mediation program to reduce the need for disciplinary suspensions while empowering students through a democratic process.

It began as a pilot program in September 1988. Since then, more than 90 disputes have been resolved and suspensions have declined considerably. The student mediators not only improved the working of their school, but also trained teams from other schools, including the group of junior high students shown.

For information about Rich Township's peer mediation program contact: Tony Moriarty, Rich Township High School, 3600 W. 203rd St., Olympia Fields, IL 60461, 708/748-6070.

For general information about peer mediation in the schools contact: National Association for Mediation in Education (NAME), c/o U-Mass Mediation Project, University of Massachusetts, 425 Amity Street, Amherst, MA 01002, 413/545-2462.

LAW STUDENTS COOPERATE WITH SCHOOLS

Volunteers from the law schools of St. Louis University and Washington University have enriched their lives and those of many young people by participating in the St. Louis Public Schools' Law and Citizenship Education Unit's preschool through twelfth grade LRE program. Training is provided by the Unit and the Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis with assistance from chapters of Phi Alpha Delta Law Fraternity. Beginning in 1980, 15 law students per year have attended the St. Louis University Law School Youth and Law Seminar. These law students then team with the Practical and Living Law teacher to present lessons twice a week for 12 weeks.

For information about this program contact: Law and Citizenship Education Unit, St. Louis Public Schools, 5183 Raymond, St. Louis, MO 63113, 314/361-5500.

BRINGING PRACTICAL LAW INTO THE CLASSROOM

Children are pleasantly surprised to learn that laws are subject to many interpretations. Everyday issues that affect their lives become topics of spirited discussion for the students in the law class of Chicago's Kenwood Academy. The discussion of tenant/landlord rights shown in the tape is one of many practical law topics students can relate to.

The lesson shown was based on the text, *Street Law*. For information about the text contact: National Institute for Citizen Education in the Law (NICEL), 711 G Street, SE, Washington, DC 20003, 202/546-6649.

WHAT IS A LAW MAGNET SCHOOL?

The forensics class seen in the tape is one of several law-related classes offered at a law magnet school. A growing number of school districts have recognized LRE's popularity by instituting law magnet programs offering a broad spectrum of LRE classes for ninth through twelfth graders. Law magnets help students understand and appreciate the roles of law and citizenship in a democracy, encourage student participation in the community and the nation, and acquaint students with career options in law-related fields.

A key factor to the appeal of law magnets is the breadth of high quality courses they offer. Typical courses include: Introduction to Law, Constitutional Law, Criminology, International Law, Forensic Science, Law Enforcement, Environmental Law, Legal Skills, and School Court.

For information about the law magnet school shown contact: Project P.A.T.C.H., Northport-East Northport U.F.S.D., 110 Elwood Road, Northport, NY 11768, 516/261-9000, Ext. 284.

For general information about law magnet schools contact the National LRE Resource Center, ABA/YEFC, 541 N. Fairbanks Court, Chicago, IL 60611-3314.

SPECIAL EVENT: A MOOT COURT COMPETITION

A moot court competition

Moot courts and mock trials stimulate trials, using students as the attorneys, witnesses, and sometimes judges or other court personnel. An interesting variation of the mock trial is the moot court competition seen in the tape. After studying a unit on civil law, teams of students are allowed ten minutes to study an index card giving a brief outline of a case. A witness and an attorney are chosen to represent each team in front of a judge(s) in a moot trial that lasts about 20 minutes. With no time to memorize their speeches, students must "think on their feet" in front of the judge. The competition is scored, a winner declared, and the case debriefed, but the real appeal of the event is the fun of learning about civil law.

For information about the moot court competition shown, contact: Law Youth and Citizenship Program, New York State Bar Association, One Elk Street, Albany, NY 12207, 518/474-1460.

For information about the national mock trial competition, contact the National LRE Resource Center, ABA/YEFC, 541 N. Fairbanks Court, Chicago, IL 60611-3314.

CITIZENS OF THE WORLD: A VISIT TO THE HAGUE

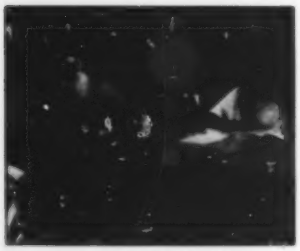
Student presentation at The Hague

Esoteric though it may sound, international law is a source of inspiration for high school students. Cooperation between the New York State Bar Association; Project P.A.T.C.H. at Northport-East Northport U.F.S.D.; the International School in Antwerp, Belgium; and School 1129 in Moscow, Russia produced the videotape scene at the International Court of Justice at The Hague.

Over a period of 18 months, students from the three schools met twice face-to-face and used telephones, fax machines and electronic mail to produce a treaty proposing a "council of nations" to curb unnecessary deforestation worldwide and to aid reforestation efforts. They met at The Hague to present the treaty and petitions containing 13,000 signatures calling for an end to global deforestation.

For information about the international law program shown, contact: Law Youth and Citizenship Program, New York State Bar Association, One Elk Street, Albany, NY 12207, 518/474-1460
or Project P.A.T.C.H., Northport-East Northport U.F.S.D., 110 Elwood Road, Northport, NY 11768, 516/261-9000, Ext. 284.

A CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY—COMMUNITY SERVICE



A community service project

John F. Kennedy's stirring admonition to "...ask what you can do for your country" inspired a generation. Today these words live on in the hearts of young people who volun teer their time to provide needed services to their communities.

The tutoring program shown in the tape is but one example. A joint project of the Youth Community Service (YCS) project of the Constitutional Rights Foundation and the Los Angeles Unified School District, YCS reaches more than 1,000 students at 23 high schools with service projects that involve an additional 20,000 young people. In addition to tutoring, activities include tree-planting, graffiti removal, homeless relief, child care, adopt-a-grandparent, and more.

For information about the community service program shown, contact: Constitutional Rights Foundation, 601 S. Kingsley Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90005, 213/487-5590.

BROOKLYN SCHOOLS ADOPTED BY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

The D.A., a paralegal "adopter" and her students

The Adopt-A-School/Project Legal Lives: Partnership for Respect and Esteem, is a collaboration between the Kings County District Attorney's Office, the Board of Education and independent educational institutions in Brooklyn, New York. By the fall of 1991, more than 200 members of the D.A.'s office were making biweekly visits to fifth grade classes at 115 elementary schools.

Assistant district attorneys, paralegals, detective investigators, video technicians, operations staff, graphic artists, computer personnel, secretaries and receptionists are among the volunteers who commit 10 hours each month to work with a fifth grade teacher to teach about stereotyping, the consequences of drug abuse, peer resistance skills, and the legal ramifications of these issues. Public and private schools are involved as well as a state school for the deaf.

For information about the adopt-a-school program shown, contact: Project Legal Lives, Kings County District Attorney's Office, 210 Joralemon Street, 6th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201, 718/802-2978.

For information about lawyers in the classroom contact: the National LRE Resource Center, ABA/YEFC, 541 N. Fairbanks Court, Chicago, IL 60611-3314.

A LAW DAY STUDENT CONFERENCE

Since 1975 the Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago (CRFC) has organized Law Day celebrations for students. Currently that celebration involves conferences for more than 100 eighth graders and nearly 300 high school students who meet in federal courtrooms in Chicago. Interviews with high school participants are shown in the videotape.

During each conference, several concurrent point/counterpoint sessions are presented by volunteer attorneys and representatives of organizations relevant to the cases. Students are actively involved in the discussion and asked to vote on each issue.

The topics for the point/counterpoint sessions are taken from the CRFC's Illinois Law Test, which contains several brief case descriptions to stimulate discussion of current local, state and national legal issues. With the assistance of the Illinois State Bar Association and the Illinois State Board of Education, the test and a discussion guide are distributed to social studies chairpersons throughout the state.

For information about the Law Day conference shown, contact: Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago, 407 S. Dearborn, Suite 1700, Chicago, IL 60605, 312/663-9057.

For information about other Law Day programs contact: the National LRE Resource Center, ABA/YEFC, 541 N. Fairbanks Court, Chicago, IL 60611-3314.

A Sample Question from the 1991 Illinois Law Test

ITEM #3. People in Garden City were being killed with assault weapons, like the Uzi, which holds more that 30 rounds of ammunition. The City Council passed an ordinance which said that the manufacturers, importers and dealers of assault weapons were strictly liable for all injuries inflicted on innocent persons. This ordinance made it easier for victims of crimes involving assault weapons (or their families) to sue assault weapon manufacturers.

More cities should pass similar Assault Weapon Liability Acts because the Second Amendment does not guarantee that everyone can carry an Uzi.

☐ AGREE ☐ DISAGREE

[Courtesy of Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago]

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What Is Law-Related Education?

According to the Law-Related Education Act of 1978 "... the term 'law-related education' means education to equip non-lawyers with knowledge and skills pertaining to the law, the legal process, and the legal system, and the fundamental principles and values on which these are based." Law-related education (LRE) helps students develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, and attitudes necessary to function effectively in our pluralistic, democratic society based on the rule of law.

Law-related education teaches young people how the legal and political systems function and—most of all—how they fit in. How does the law affect them and how can they affect it? What relevance do the Constitution and Bill of Rights have in their lives? Why have certain legal procedures been established and how well have they worked in resolving disputes?

Law-related education is about real issues as they affect real people, people of all ages and backgrounds. At its best, LRE teaches students to reason through hard questions and to grapple with realistic problems. Elementary school children might be asked to puzzle through questions of fairness in the water-fountain line or examine the need for rules in sports and games. Older students might look at the problems of assuring equality in a diverse society or the conflict between rights and responsibilities. The emphasis may often be on applied skills, such as how to read a contract and become a wiser consumer, or may be on such broad skills as analytical thinking, ability to persuade others, and ability to reach decisions after having identified issues and weighed evidence.

Law-related education is active. It teaches because it involves kids. It works because it has them confront—in case studies, role plays, mock trials, and other active instructional techniques—the actual dilemmas that we must face if we're to make democracy work. In many programs, students also get out of their classroom to meet with lawyers, judges, police, and community people, and to see the system in action.

Law-related education is a proven way of improving youngsters' self-image, their attitudes, and their knowledge about law and government. The experience of hundreds of communities, large and small, shows that law-related education can make a difference.

[Adapted from the Winter 1983 *LRE Project Exchange*—"Why Lawyers Must Care About LRE," published by the American Bar Association.]

Why Law-Related Education Is Important for Teachers

Mary Vidakis, Teacher

"...these programs address the responsibilities of citizenship."

A study by the National Science Foundation reported in the February 1979 issue of *Social Education* indicated that classroom teachers regard citizenship education as one of their major responsibilities. This belief is echoed by R. Freeman Butts, a nationally recognized educator, who states in his book, *The Revival of Civic Learning: A Rationale for Citizenship Education in American Schools*, "the original purpose of universal public education as viewed by the founders of the American Republic was to prepare all persons for their roles as citizens in the new representative democracy." Associate Professor Walter Parker of the University of Washington adds in his November, 1989 *Social Education* article, "How to Help Students Learn History and Geography":

> Schools must remember that they are not primarily for helping children acquire jobs, get into college, or develop a better self-concept. As worthy as these goals may be, they are less important than the school's distinctly *civic* mission: to educate students to be capable of — and passionately committed to — meeting the challenges of the democratic way of life.

Surveys conducted by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) have served to focus public attention on how well schools have fared in addressing this civic mission. In 1976, 1982 and 1988 students at ages 13 and 17 were administered a civics trend assessment. The resulting 1990 publication, *The Civics Report Card*, stated that the "17-year-olds participating in the most recent assessment tended to perform significantly less well than their counterparts in the earlier assessments." The NAEP also found that although "[m]ost students in the upper grades — 89 percent of the eighth graders and 94 percent of the twelfth graders — correctly identified Ronald Reagan as president ... only 7 percent of the eighth graders and 19 percent of the twelfth graders wrote well-developed responses" to a question on the president's responsibilities.

Further evidence of deficiencies in citizenship education comes from a 1987 national survey by the Hearst Corporation that found that only 41 percent of the respondents could correctly identify the Bill of Rights. Four years later, during the year of the bicentennial of the Bill of Rights, an American Bar Association survey determined that only 33 percent of those questioned could correctly identify the Bill of Rights. Since the Constitution and Bill of Rights are the documents that establish and protect American citizenship, widespread ignorance of either is cause for grave concern.

While schools have traditionally been expected to fulfill this civic mission, teachers generally have been given little practical curricula to use in implementing it. How does LRE help? One way is through existing LRE workshops and materials, which feature curricula that can be infused at all grade levels. In every state, LRE project leaders are available to assist schools by training teachers. What they offer is both practical and exciting.

When students learn about the purpose of rules and how to apply conflict management and critical thinking skills, they make their classroom a more pleasant and productive environment, both for themselves and their teachers. Through LRE, teachers experience the joy of seeing their students truly involved in learning and gain satisfaction in preparing a generation for productive citizenship.

Why School Administrators Should Include Law-Related Education in Their Schools

School administrators attend an LRE workshop

"...children become more knowledgeable ...in discussing the elements of the law..."

—Marian E. Cotter, Principal

In 1978 Congress passed the Law-Related Education Act recognizing law-related education (LRE) as an important curricular component, providing federal funding for program development and implementation. At an historic education summit in 1991 the president and governors developed six national education goals, entitled *America 2000*, to prepare America for international competition in the next century. Of the six goals, two specifically cited preparation for responsible citizenship as their objective.

The concept of public education is based on the notion that an educated citizen is essential in a democratic society. To advance that concept, every state requires that students acquire a basic familiarity with the political-legal framework of our governmental systems. The schools, therefore, are charged with the responsibility to teach citizenship.

Law-related education does not take time away from "the basics." First, it *is* a "basic." (What in the curriculum is more basic than citizenship education?) Second, LRE is an excellent way to develop the basic language skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. LRE can be incorporated into the curriculum in a variety of ways, many of which do not require adding another course of study. Teachers can infuse LRE into existing courses as well as impart it through the informal curriculum, such as through classroom management techniques and school governance procedures.

Science lessons on ecology and the environment, for example, include discussion of rights and responsibilities, ownership and fairness. Children's literature provides many opportunities to discuss privacy, authority, personal rights and group welfare. In the informal curriculum, complex concepts of authority, justice, due process and equity are made easier to grasp as children participate in making and enforcing classroom and school rules.

An added bonus of law-related education is its cost-effectiveness. Its real cost is the time, creativity, commitment and efforts of school administrators and teachers. Many existing reading books, social studies texts and audio-visual materials are excellent vehicles for illustrating LRE concepts. When LRE materials and training programs are used, they often can be supported through small funding grants from community agencies such as local bar associations, the local League of Women Voters or other community organizations involved in promoting citizenship education.

Yet another benefit of LRE is that it fosters good community relations. Community resource people play key roles in successful LRE programs. Whether visiting a classroom, hosting a field trip or consulting with small groups of students, community resource people are role models who can make a significant impression on students who previously may never have had positive personal contact with members of the legal or law enforcement community. Likewise, community resource people gain a better understanding of the interests and concerns of the youngest members of their community while becoming more personally involved in their local schools.

The widespread availability of teacher training programs also facilitates the addition of LRE into the curriculum. The ABA publishes an annual list of LRE summer institutes, which often are available for college credit. Local LRE projects (see the accompanying list of LRE leaders) can provide background information and training for law-related education. Community colleges and universities frequently offer LRE courses. Many local bar associations provide both training and support services for school staffs. Other community agencies may provide information or training in their particular law-related areas.

Why should school administrators put LRE into their schools? Because it is a basic subject important to every student, is easy and inexpensive to infuse into existing curricula, encourages community involvement in the school, and, when teacher training is needed, it is easily available.

[Adapted from "What Principals Should Know about Law-Related Education" by Charlotte C. Anderson and Mabel C. McKinney-Browning, *Principal*, January 1982]

Why Attorneys Should Be Involved in Law-Related Education

Thomas P. Sullivan, Attorney

"It's an exhilarating experience."

Society as a whole benefits when children learn about the law and the legal system. One example comes from a 1982 study conducted by the Social Science Education Consortium and the Center for Action Research. The study found that "when properly taught, law-related education can have a positive effect on delinquency and can improve a range of student attitudes related to delinquency (e.g., acceptance of violence, reliance on relationships with delinquent peers)." Key to this finding, however, was "adequate preparation and use of outside resource persons."

This study confirms what many LRE teachers already know: that while they can educate about the law and citizenship without the assistance of attorneys, their effectiveness is greatly enhanced by the first-hand experiences and enthusiasm an attorney can bring to the students. Attorneys who become involved in LRE also derive personal benefits, including:

- the satisfaction of sharing knowledge and experience with students and teachers;
- improving the public image of attorneys;
- the change of pace from the pressures of practice to the openness of educational settings;
- the opportunity to eliminate common stereotypes of attorneys;
- the enjoyment of hands-on teaching;
- the candid feedback children give on their perceptions of the legal system; and
- the rewards of spending time with motivated young people.

What are some of the ways attorneys can become involved? One common, time-limited activity is a presentation by an attorney as part of a school's Career Day or Law Day (May 1). Rather than lecturing, this presentation can engage children in an active manner through storytelling, games, roleplaying, mock trial or lively discussion as shown in the videotape. Attorneys who serve as judges at mock trials can "debrief" the case to give the students a better understanding of the significant issues involved and critique their presentations. In this way, attorneys help breathe life into the legal system.

Another approach is to make an attorney a "partner" with a class. This type of arrangement can be limited to one visit per semester or expanded to one or more visits per month. It can include attorney visits to the classroom or class trips to the courthouse or other legal/law enforcement institution. The attorney can also act as liaison between the class and other members of the legal system, such as judges, probation officers, police officers and court reporters. The focus can be a broad overview of the legal system or it can be more specific, such as coaching a mock trial team or discussing the rights and responsibilities of "coming of age."

The resulting relationship truly helps teachers and students see the human side of law practice ... the satisfactions and disappointments, the challenges and frustrations. No longer will the students have their perspective shaped by images seen on television or in the movies. They get to know lawyers, not as "glib, well-dressed professionals" who can sway juries and speak "legalese," but as individuals who can share a student's desire to right a wrong.

[Adapted from *The Lawyer-Teacher Partnership Program: A Resource Guide for Attorneys in Law-Related Education* by David M. Schimmel, for Phi Alpha Delta Public Service Center, (New York State Bar Association, Albany, NY, 1986).]

How the Courts Can Be Involved in Law-Related Education

Hon. Harry Richard Brown, Judge

"I think that every attorney, every judge has a responsibility... to get involved so that people will understand ...what the courts are all about."

For many children, their only exposure to the courts is through television and the movies. To correct misconceptions and omissions of these superficial portrayals of our justice system, many LRE educators turn to the courtroom as an effective center for learning.

Julie Van Camp, in an article appearing in the ABA publication, *Building Bridges to the Law*, reported that in Massachusetts, a survey of 69 district court presiding justices showed that judges felt that respect for the law and the judicial system had deteriorated. They believed that good public relations and a concern for the reputation of the legal system argued for a more active role by the courts in law-related education.

There are many ways to involve the courts, both in and out of the courthouse. One is to have students visit the courtroom and observe a case in progress. The visit itself, however, is only a part of the learning experience. Prior to the visit, students are introduced to the language, personnel, and physical arrangement of the courtroom and are told about the case they will observe. During recesses, students can discuss the case with the judge or other court personnel. When they return to school, students can exchange their observations in greater detail and research answers to some of the questions raised by their visit.

Another approach invites students to act as a "shadow" jury in a brief bench trial. Students hear the evidence, debate the case in a conference room and, during a recess, discuss their findings with the judge. Judges have found that students not only develop listening, critical-thinking, and decision-making skills, but also learn about the elements of a crime and the rules of evidence. An added benefit is that those students will be far better prepared to serve as jurors when they reach adulthood.

Judges, court officers, probation officers and others who work in the courts are the best resources for teaching about our court system. Through personal contacts with students, they can demystify the judicial system and correct misconceptions about the courts. In addition, the court's prestige lends considerable weight to the recognition of LRE as a significant part of the school curriculum.

Benefits are not limited to the students. In court, judges and other court personnel usually see only children who are on the "wrong side" of the law. They welcome the opportunity to bring students to the courthouse and hear their candid questions and concerns. Students bring a refreshing perspective frequently missing from the daily court routine, an environment often filled with tragedy and unhappiness.

The former president of the Pennsylvania Bar Association, William M. Powers, put it this way:

> We hear and read much that condemns our young people, their presumed disinterest in the law, or worse, their alienation from it. I suggest that disinterest or alienation is merely symptomatic of a lack of understanding which is exasperating. We are the beneficiaries of this great system of law, this epic creation of western man, and somehow we have been largely unable to tell its story to our youth.

Hon. Harry Richard Brown, a state supreme court judge who participates in the Law Day moot court competition in Northport, New York observes, "I think that every attorney, every judge has a responsibility . . . to get involved so that people will understand . . . what the courts are all about."

Why Law-Related Education Is Important for Police Officers

Officer Charmaine Simpson

"I love it…I wouldn't trade it for anything."

Media portrayals of police are usually drawn in stark black and white terms with police seen as heroes or villains with little grey area in between. The result is an unrealistic and often negative view of police officers and their work.

Such perceptions take root early in young people. For example, a 1985 Minnesota Youth Poll, conducted by the Center for Youth Development at the University of Minnesota, found that only 12 percent of students believed that police viewed them positively.

- Elementary students thought that the police viewed them as: "Average dumb people." "Not much."
- Junior high students thought that the police viewed them as: "Regular kids." "Some probably think we're troublemakers."
- The senior high students thought that the police saw them as: "Rebellious." "Delinquent troublemakers."

Can we expect students to interact positively with police when their impressions are so overwhelmingly negative? Law-related education has proven to be an effective mechanism for improving the perceptions of students about police officers and police officers about students.

As with other members of the community, students benefit greatly from firsthand educational contact with police officers. Police and police work become humanized through candid, face-to-face interaction, and misconceptions can be dispelled. The broader role of serving and protecting the community can be demonstrated when police share legal information that can be useful to students in their everyday lives.

There are many ways police can play a role in LRE. For example, police officers can tell elementary students age-appropriate stories or engage them in games that address the need for rules and rule-making or lead tours of a crime lab, police museum, police training academy or give demonstrations of the canine or mounted units. Properly prepared older students may "ride-along" with police on patrol to see firsthand the reality of everyday police work, with follow-up discussion reinforcing and expanding the learning experience.

The benefits of police-student interactions are twofold: 1) it teaches students how the police really function; and 2) it gives police an opportunity to interact positively with the members of their community. The response of Officer Charmaine Simpson of the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department's "We Are Responsible" program is typical: "I love it…I wouldn't trade it for anything."

WHY COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS ARE CRITICAL TO CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

1. Adds legitimacy to the school curriculum. Students learn from the actual police officers, lawyers, judges, and commissioners, first hand, thus adding authenticity to their teaching.

2. Develops maturity and skills in problem solving. When activity-based education (role playing, case studies, mock trials) is used by the resource person in the classroom, students learn that the real world involves hard decisions.

3. Develops respect for authority and personal responsibility. Citizenship skills that develop an understanding of our rights and our responsibilities are reinforced through these programs.

4. Reduces delinquency and develops changed attitudes. Studies by the Colorado Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Council testify to the merits of using community resource people in the classroom.

5. Great sources of information. Community resources provide information that is beyond the scope of the average classroom teacher. No teacher can be a know-it-all, and we need to realize that good use of community resource people can provide students with a broader base of knowledge and understanding.

6. Increases bonding to school, community, and nation. Students feel more a part of a larger group, with a personal connection to those systems.

7. Provides opportunities for community service, vocational education, and development of good citizenship.

8. High interest level among the students. Well-planned, experience-based participation by resource people in the classroom is always exciting and fun for the students.

9. Demystifies the American political and legal system. First-hand information from the resource people helps students to be less confused, alienated, and apathetic towards our political and legal systems.

10. Increases understanding. Teaches first hand about our government institutions and systems.

[From the bar/school partnership handbook, *The Courts and the Schools* by the American Bar Association]

THOSE WHO MADE THE VIDEOTAPE, *A More Perfect Union*, POSSIBLE:

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